

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-8 and 10-21 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks as set forth hereinbelow.

Claim for Priority

It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner has recognized the Applicant's claim for foreign priority. Because the Applicant's claim for foreign priority has been perfected, no additional action is required from the Applicant at this time.

Drawings

It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner has approved the formal drawings submitted by the Applicant. The drawings comply with the requirements of the USPTO. No further action is necessary.

Acknowledgement of Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner has acknowledged the previously Information Disclosure Statements. Initialed copies of the PTO-1449 forms have been received from the Examiner. No further action is necessary at this time.

Specification and Abstract Changes

In addition, the specification and Abstract have been amended to correct minor informalities. No new matter has been added.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Russell. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended independent claim 1 includes a combination of elements and is directed to a dynamic absorber for a washing machine. The dynamic absorber includes a fixing member provided on an outer circumferential surface of a bearing housing which is positioned beneath an outer tub, and a dynamic absorption member extended from an outer surface of the fixing member and vibrating when the outer tub vibrates and thereby absorbing a vibration of the outer tub. Further, the dynamic absorption member includes an extension member extended from the outer surface of the fixing member in a radial direction and vibrated up and down, and a mass member provided around an outer circumference of the extension member and vibrated together with the extension member.

These features are supported at least by Figures 2 and 3 and paragraphs [0031] and [0037], which illustrate a dynamic absorber 10 including an extension member 12 that vibrates up and down, and a mass member 13 that vibrates together with the extension member 12.

The Office Action relies on Russell as teaching a dynamic absorption member. However, it is respectfully noted Russell is specifically directed to a flywheel, which is attached to the back of a crank shaft. As known, a flywheel provides inertia to keep the crankshaft turning smoothly

during periods when no power is applied and also forms a base for the starting gear and manual transmission for the clutch assembly. That is, the flywheel in Russell rotates together with the engine and is used to regulate the engine's rotation. It is respectfully submitted that one skilled in the art would not take the flywheel taught in Russell and combine it with a washing machine to provide a dynamic absorption member.

On the contrary, the extension member of the present invention extends from the outer surface of the fixing member in a radial direction and vibrates up and down. Further, the mass member provided around the outer circumference of the extension member vibrates together with the extension member. Thus, the extension member and mass member of the dynamic absorption member vibrate up and down so as to stabilize the outer tub. Russell does not teach or suggest these features.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted independent claim 1 and each of the claims depending therefrom patentably define over Russell.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 10-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Russell in view of Altnau. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 10 has been amended in a similar fashion as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Further, claim 10 has also been amended to recite that a stiffness of the extension member is tuned to a rated rotation in order to reduce vibrations of the outer tub at the rate of rotation during dehydration. These features are supported at least by Figures 5 and paragraphs [0011], [0031], [0037] and [0035], for example.

As discussed above, Russell does not teach or suggest an extension member and mass member vibrating up and down. Further, Altnau is directed to a mating support cup mounting which permits pivotal movement of the entire washing machine tub assembly without lateral movement in combination with the balance ring assembly 106 (see column 5, lines 58-64 and Figure 1). The balance ring assembly 106 spins with transmission, the other drive mechanism components and the inner tub during the spin cycle. That is, the balance ring assembly 106 coupled to the shaft 68 rotates with the shaft 68 and stabilizes the rotating inner tub during the spin cycle (see column 4, lines 63-65 and the Abstract). Further, the shaft 68 is positioned at an inner surface of the hub portion of the balance ring member 106, and the bearing assembly 70 is positioned at an upper part of the balance ring member 106. However, Altnau does not teach or suggest an extension member tuned to a rated rotation of the dehydration.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted independent claim 10 and each of the claims depending therefrom are also allowable.

New Claims

In addition, new claims 19-21 have been added to set forth the invention in a varying scope. In particular, new dependent claims 19 and 20 recite that a mass of the mass member is tuned to a rate of rotation in order to reduce vibrations of the outer tub at the rated rotation during the hydration. New dependent claim 21 recites that a stiffness of the extension member is tuned to a rate of rotation in order to reduce vibrations of the outer tub at the rate of rotation during dehydration (similar to the amended independent claim 10). These features are

supported at least by [0035]. It is respectfully submitted these claims further define over the applied art as Russell and Altnau do not teach or suggest the features recited therein.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are therefore respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks, it is believed that the claims clearly distinguish over the patents relied on by the Examiner, either alone or in combination.

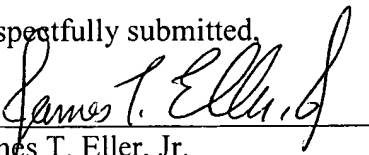
If the Examiner has any questions or comments, please contact David A. Bilodeau, Reg. No. 42,325 at the offices of Birch, Stewart, Kolasch & Birch, LLP.

Pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), the Applicants hereby petition for an extension of one (1) months to August 13, 2006 in which to file a reply to the Office Action. The required fee of \$120.00 is enclosed herewith.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: July 14, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By 

James T. Eller, Jr.

Registration No.: 39,538

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

8110 Gatehouse Road

Suite 100 East

P.O. Box 747

Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747

(703) 205-8000

Attorney for Applicant